DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ACQUISITION TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
POLICY

1. REFERENCES

a. Public Law 101-510, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1991, "Title XII Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act," November 5, 1990.

b. DoD Directive 5000.52, "Defense Acquisition Education, Training, and Career Development Program," October 25, 1991.

c. DoD 5000.52M, "Career Development Program for Acquisition Personnel," November, 1995, authorized by DoD Directive 5000.52, October 25, 1991.

d. DoD Directive 5000.57, "Defense Acquisition Workforce," October 22,1991.

e. DoD Instruction 5000.58, "Defense Acquisition Workforce," January 14, 1992.

f. DoD Instruction 5000.55, "Reporting Management Information on DoD Military and Civilian Acquisition Personnel and Position," November 1, 1991.

g. Title 5, Chapter 41, United States Code.

h. Defense Acquisition University Catalog (current issue).

i. DA Regulation 690-400, Chapter 410, Training.

j. Part 410 of Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.

2. SCOPE

This Army Acquisition Tuition Assistance Program (ATAP) Policy applies to all individuals who meet the requirements set forth in the References.

3. BACKGROUND

Title XII of Public Law 101-510, "National Defense Authorization Act for FY 1991, Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA), November 5, 1990," amended the training law, 5. U.S.C., chapter 41, by providing in 5 U.S.C., chapter 4107 and part 410 of title 5 code of Federal Regulations, provisions whereby agencies may authorize training leading to an academic degree in occupations of anticipated shortage of qualified personnel. DAWIA states a shortage will exist in acquisition personnel throughout the Department of Defense (DoD) until September 30, 2001. House

Authorization Bill, Section 1103 – Continuation of Tuition Reimbursement and Training for certain acquisition personnel amends section 1745 of title 10, United States Code, to extend the "shortage of personnel" designation for qualified civilian acquisition personnel of the DoD until September 30, 2005. These policies and procedures implement the ATAP within the Department of the Army (DA).

4. APPLICABILITY

   a. The ATAP is available for civilian Army Acquisition, Logistics and Technology Workforce (AL&TWF) members who wish to complete an undergraduate degree, fulfill the business-hour requirement cited in reference a of this document, or complete a graduate degree.

   (1) Undergraduate degrees must include at least 24 semester hours in an acquisition career field and 12 semester hours of business.

   (2) ATAP may be used to complete either 24 semester credit hours (or equivalent) from among the following disciplines: accounting, business finance, law, contracts, quantitative methods, and organization and management; or 24 semester credit hours (or equivalent) in an acquisition career field and 12 semester hours in the disciplines cited above.

   (3) ATAP is also available for civilian Army Acquisition Corps (AAC), Corps Eligible (CE) members, who are level III certified, and interested in pursuing graduate study in a business, scientific, or technical specialty, as cited in reference a and outlined in DoD Directive 5000.52M.

   b. ATAP is not authorized for education beyond the master's degree level. ATAP funding may only be used for study at accredited colleges or universities within the member's local commuting area; travel funds are not authorized. Classes will be taken during non-duty hours, unless the participant's organization approves class attendance during duty hours.

   c. To be eligible for ATAP funding benefits, an applicant must currently be a member of the AL&TWF. If the applicant is NOT currently occupying an acquisition position (even if a previous AAW/AAC member), he/she is not entitled to ATAP educational benefits. If the ATAP participant was previously approved for ATAP funding and subsequently moves to a non-acquisition billet, or the encumbered billet is changed to non-acquisition, the ATAP student is no longer eligible for ATAP funding.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. **The Deputy Director, Acquisition Career Management (DDACM):**

(1) Has oversight and control of the ATAP policy and procedures.

(2) Is responsible for the development and management of the programs that provide for the education, training, and career progression of AL&TWF members.

(3) Serves as final approval authority for employees accepted to participate in the program and provides approved board results to the U.S. Total Army Personnel Command (PERSCOM) and the Regional Offices.

b. **The U.S. Army ACQUISITION SUPPORT CENTER (ASC)**

(1) Develops and issues the ATAP policy and procedures.

(2) Provides oversight of the ATAP.

(3) Manages the ATAP budget and processes all requests for tuition assistance.

(4) Ensures widest dissemination of information on ATAP announcements, information, policy and procedural.

(5) Provides customer assistance on all aspects of ATAP.

(6) Tracks the progress of each ATAP student ensuring that grade levels ("B" graduate or "C" undergraduate) are maintained and that changes to schedules or funding requirements are approved.

c. **Acquisition Career Managers (ACMs)**

(1) Provide customer assistance on all aspects of ATAP.

(2) Ensure widest dissemination of information on ATAP.

d. **The U.S. Total Army Personnel Command (PERSCOM)**

(1) Publishes ATAP announcement on PERSCOM (AMB) web page.

(2) Accepts applications for ATAP.

(3) Determines applicant eligibility.

(4) Reviews applicant submissions.

(5) Plans, organizes and conducts ATAP Board.

(6) Provides ASC with results of board.

(7) Notifies selectees/non-selectees of status.

(8) Publishes results of board on PERSCOM (AMB) web page.

e. **ATAP Participants**

(1) Apply for admission to nationally or regionally accredited schools able to confer a degree.

(2) Submit applications and supporting documentation as outlined in ATAP announcements and information on the PERSCOM web page https://www.perscom.army.mil/OPfam51/ambmain.htm . A separate application must be provided for each opportunity (e.g., 12-24 semester hours of business, bachelor's degree, or master's degree). Questions on the ATAP announcement and the application process should be directed to the Acquisition Career Managers. A list of PERSCOM and Regional ACMs can be found at http://asc.rdaisa.army.mil.

(3) Funds required beyond the funding limits outlined within this document are the responsibility of the individual ATAP participant.

(4) Entitlements under other federal programs, such as veterans' educational benefits or the civilian career programs (ACTEDS) should be used prior to applying for tuition assistance under the ATAP.

(5) Attain a grade of at least a "B" in graduate courses and "C" in undergraduate courses.

(6) Upon acceptance into the program, all communications regarding ATAP issues should be directed to the National Capital Region Customer Service Office (NCR CSO). Coordination with the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center/local training coordinators is not required under this policy.

(7) Provide final course grades to the NCR CSO within 60 days of course completion. Failure to provide grade information may result in loss of future funding or removal from the program. Notify the NCR CSO of completion of ATAP opportunity and complete the Exit Survey.

(8) Follow reimbursement procedures, as outlined in USC, Title 5, 4101-4118, to reimburse the government for classes with an incomplete grade, withdrawal, or grade below "B" in graduate courses and below "C" in undergraduate courses, or departure from federal government service. All reimbursements for ATAP will be completed through the ASC Resource Management Office.

(9) Ensure that first-line supervisors are made aware of academic or other problems that might interfere with success in the educational process.

(10) Select courses from among approved program of study. When planned courses are canceled, conflict with other courses, or are unavailable, provide appropriate substitutes to the NCR CSO prior to course commencement. Failure to provide appropriate substitutes prior to making changes to the course curriculum may result in the loss of future funding or removal from the program.

(11) Notify the NCR CSO immediately when a change in employment no longer qualifies you for program participation.

(12) In coordination with your supervisor, develop a five-year Individual Development Plan (IDP) that lists all courses to be funded by ATAP.

(13) Read and follow the information outlined in the ATAP Procedures.

(14) Sign and date the agreement to notify the ASC of movement from a Federal Government position before payback time has been met. Ensure supervisor signs and dates the agreement.

(15) Ensure beginning dates for each course submitted on the DD Form 1556 match exactly the dates identified by the college/university. Adjusting start dates may result in removal from the program.

f. **The Organization/Supervisor**

(1) Be aware of the individual's application for ATAP and ensure individual courses have been included and approved on the IDP.

(2) Ensure the individual is available for school and not encumbered by excessive overtime or travel.

(3) Reimburse tuition and other funding provided if substantial travel, duties, or other training prohibit the student from successful completion of classes.

(4) Ensure that the NCR CSO is notified immediately when a change in employment no longer qualifies the employee for program participation and sign the individual's agreement to notify the ASC of movement from a Federal Government position before payback time has been completed.

(5) Complete the Supervisor Evaluation Sheet.

6. **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

a. **Programs of Study.** The ATAP program will support the following educational pursuits: 12-24 semester hours of business required for AAC or CE membership (unless this has already been attained through previous college work); an undergraduate degree for the workforce; or an undergraduate or graduate degree for those workforce members that are either AAC or CE (Level III) members. All degrees should follow the disciplines that underpin the functions of the AAC. Changes to the approved course of study must be coordinated with the NCR CSO prior to funding approval for the new course.

b. **Learning Institutions.** ATAP funding will support educational pursuits through all schools and programs of study that are nationally or regionally accredited.

c. **Academic Standards**. Program participants must complete all courses with at least a grade of "B" in graduate courses and at least a "C" in undergraduate courses. Withdrawal from an ATAP-funded course may result in the employee being required to reimburse the government for all costs incurred with that particular course and subsequent removal from ATAP.

d. **Nontraditional Modes of Learning**. ATAP will fund nontraditional modes of learning (courses via television, satellite, and on line) when the courses are included in the program of study and are part of the school's alternate modes of training.

e. **College-Level Examination Program/Defense Activity for Nontraditional Education Support (CLEP/DANTES) Tests**. ATAP funding will be provided for CLEP/DANTES testing, but a nonpassing grade on any test will require reimbursement by the individual.

f. **Electives.** Electives required as part of a degree must underpin the functions of the AAC. Electives that do not meet this requirement will not be funded by ATAP.

g. **Prerequisite Courses**. ATAP will not fund prerequisite work. This includes any prerequisite course work that is required for admission into the ATAP-approved course of study, or prerequisite course work that is required to complete a degree program.

h. **Payback.** Payback of time for the ATAP opportunity is as stipulated on the DD Form 1556. The length of payback is three times the length of the training period. (See Section E – Trainee Agreement/Certification of DD Form 1556 for additional information).

i. **Attendance.** Any ATAP participant not attending scheduled courses for a period of one semester (without prior coordination with the NCR CSO) may be removed from the ATAP and required to reapply.

7. **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

a. Funding for the ATAP will be centrally managed for AL&TWF and AAC employees. As resources permit, educational-related expenses outlined below will be funded prior to class attendance. ATAP funds will not be provided as reimbursement for funds expended by the student or another organization.

(1) Funding for a master's degree or business hours at the master's level is limited to $1,500 per course. The maximum amount allowed per fiscal year is $7,500.   Business hours at the master's level will adhere to these funding limits. Funding required above this limit is the responsibility of the ATAP participant. The above yearly funding limitation of $7,500 applies to all ATAP participants regardless of the number of courses taken.

(2) Funding for a bachelor's degree is limited to $1,000 per course. The maximum amount allowed per fiscal year is $5,000. Business hours at the bachelor's level will adhere to these funding limits. Funding above this limit is the responsibility of the ATAP participant. The above yearly funding limitation of $5,000 applies to all ATAP participants, regardless of the number of courses taken.

(3) Funding for books is limited to $100 per course. Funding above this limit is the responsibility of the ATAP participant. Book costs and lab fees (if appropriate) may be included on a DD Form 1556 (provided the bookstore accepts it as a form of payment). If the bookstore does not accept a DD Form 1556 or if the required books are not available through the college bookstore, book reimbursement is authorized using an SF 1034 (Public Voucher for Purchases and Services Other Than Personal), which must be submitted with a copy of the purchase receipt. SF 1034 submissions must also include an Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) form and a voided check.

(4) Lab fees and technology fees required for course completion will be considered as part of the cost of the course and will be counted as part of the total yearly funding limits.

b. Registration fees, parking costs, travel expenses, entrance exams (e.g., SAT, GMAT, GRE), and all other expenses not listed in paragraph 6a are not funded by ATAP. These expenses are the responsibility of the ATAP participant.

c. Changes to pre-approved funding limits must be coordinated through the NCR CSO prior to submission of the DD Form 1556.

8. EFFECTIVE DATE, EXPIRATION DATE, AND IMPLEMENTATION

This policy is effective immediately and supersedes all previous ATAP policies. The DDACM may issue procedures as necessary to implement this directive.

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